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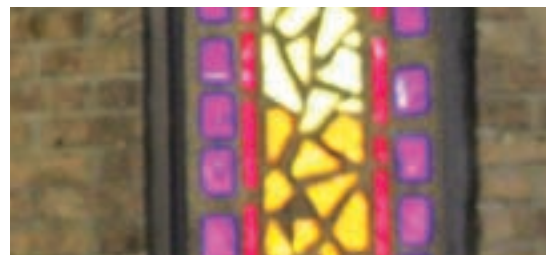


N.C. churches
respond to racial tension

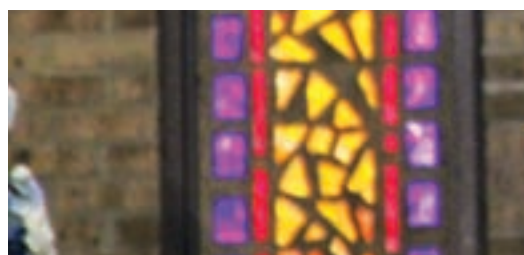
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JULY 30, 2016 • News Journal of North Carolina Baptists • VOLUME 182 NO. 16 • **BRnow.org**

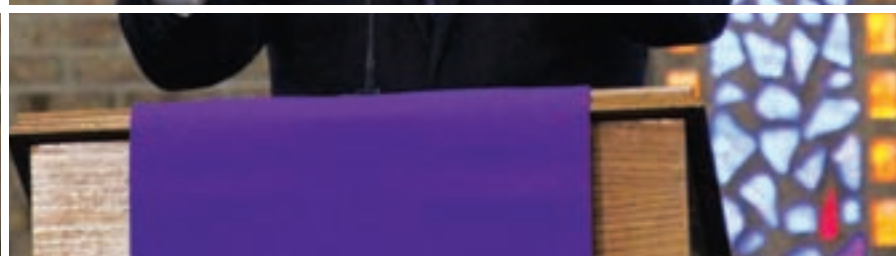
FRANK PAGE CALLS



MULTI-RACIAL ASSOCIATION



TO RENEWED FAITHFULNESS



By **SETH BROWN** | BR Content Editor

Churches face challenges. Those challenges arise from the surrounding community and shape the ministry of the local congregation. Each one is different. Some churches care deeply about racial reconciliation because their cities are diverse. Others are concerned about military ministry because an army base is located nearby. Still more wonder what the future of cooperative ministry will look like in their region, due to changing demographics and church attendance trends.

On July 19 the New South River Baptist Association (NSRBA) held a messenger meeting at Sperring Memorial Baptist Church in Fayetteville, N.C., and in that location several issues converged. The group crowded into the sanctuary, representing an association of more than 100 churches in a racially diverse community surrounding the largest military base in the world.

Frank Page, president and chief executive officer of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee, delivered the associational meeting's sermon, calling churches to renew their faithfulness to God and hear His word to them.

"God is saying, 'I am calling you back to my lordship,'" Page said, as he preached from Revelation 2:1-7. "He is in the middle of what's happening in your church. ... He is walking in our midst, and He is doing what the Lord does – to reprove, to convict, to convert. And, yes, He is still saving men, women, boys and girls – even now!"

Racial reconciliation

In an interview with the *Biblical Recorder* before the meeting, Sperring Memorial's pastor, James Fields Jr., recounted the unique history of the church. Thirty years ago the church was a predominantly white congregation, he said. Today it's 90 percent black. Rarely

do churches survive such a transition.

"This is a church for the community," Fields said.

In light of the recent deadly shootings involving black men and law enforcement officials, racial reconciliation has been a concern.

"We prayed for America to wake up and hear God," he said. "Vengeance is His. He will repay. There is never a time when we should take up arms against one of our brothers or sisters, no matter what a person does. They have to answer to God.

"I teach my church that God says, 'I will fight your battles.' The only fight that you're supposed to fight is the fight of faith."

Brian Kinlaw, pastor of Southview Baptist Church in Hope Mills, N.C., and president of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina's Board of Directors, commented on the significance of the meeting, "Our convention is far

See Calls page 11

Fire destroys Cherry Grove Baptist Church

By **LIZ TABLAZON** | BR staff writer

About 300 people filled the fellowship hall of Cherry Grove Baptist Church on July 17 for a worship service two days after a fire destroyed the church's four-year-old sanctuary. Rusty Davis, pastor of Cherry Grove Baptist Church in Cerro Gordo, N.C., said people flooded the altars, several rededicated their lives to God and a young boy was saved during Sunday's service.

Firefighters from multiple North Carolina and South Carolina departments responded to a fire that started July 15 around 4:30 p.m. at the Columbus County church. They extinguished it by 10 p.m. An investigation is ongoing, but officials believe lightning likely caused the fire. There were no injuries reported.

"We see this situation as a speed bump, not a stop sign," Davis said in a statement to the *Biblical Recorder*. "God is going to see us through, and His church will thrive."

A church member anonymously donated \$50,000 toward rebuilding the sanctuary, according to a CBS North Carolina news report. The church has received other donations, and members have created a building fund. Cherry Grove had just completed renovations on the sanctuary in September 2012.

Wednesday night services and Sunday School will resume this week, said Davis. The church is also moving forward with Vacation Bible School July 24-29 and will utilize the office complex, gymnasium and fellowship hall for the week's events.

"We are going to move some of our classes into our office complex for the time being so that we can return to some sense of normalcy in the context of small groups. ... We have great people who have been very flexible, and I praise God for it," Davis said.

On July 19, Cherry Grove's Facebook page posted a photo of the church sign in front of the sanctuary. The marquee flashed part of Romans 8:37, "No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us." **BR**

Let us serve you

The *Biblical Recorder* has a unique ministry to the people in our Baptist churches, including everyone from the pastor and staff to the layman who only attends one church event each week (or less). We exist to inform. The news and information we provide is important to every person in your church. Our staff works diligently to serve you, but we are like all other Baptist agencies and institutions – we can't serve you unless you let us. We can't serve the people in your church if they don't know about us.

We serve you, the local church. We provide a ministry to your church that no one else provides. Even the largest Southern Baptist church does not – and cannot – give their members what the *Biblical Recorder* produces every day.

Will you allow the *Biblical Recorder* to serve your church family? I want to list some very specific services we supply.

A church group subscription plan is very affordable. Set up a group plan to send the print edition of the *Recorder* to your church staff, deacons and Bible Study leaders. Some churches put the group subscription plan in their budget. The return on your investment will be strong. I believe it will prove to be very valuable to your church and to kingdom ministry around the world.

For those who prefer their news in a digital format, the digital edition of the *Recorder* is about one-third the cost of the printed paper. You can provide 20 people in your church with access to the digital edition for \$100.00 per year.

The digital edition is a PDF of the printed issue, but it is accessed online and it has links within every article and every advertisement.

Would you like to see a free sample of the digital edition? Go to BRnow.org/digital and scroll slightly down to where you see, "Want to preview a copy of the digital edition? Click here." Browse through the newspaper.

With a paid subscription you can see

previous editions over the past three years.

Did you know that if you have a paid subscription to the print edition, each subscriber is entitled to free access to the digital edition? That's right – two for the price of one. Take advantage of this great offer!



K. ALLAN BLUME
Editor

Here is another free offer you may not know about. Anyone who joins a North Carolina Baptist church and comes from a non-Baptist background is entitled to a free subscription to the *Recorder* for one year – both in print and in the digital format. Pastors report that many people are joining our churches who know nothing about Southern Baptists and North

Carolina Baptists. Some came out of other denominations or independent churches. Others recently came to know Jesus as their Savior, so they have no religious background. The Baptist State Convention of North Carolina believes strongly that these "new Baptists" will benefit greatly from reading the *Recorder*, so the convention is providing this subscription as a ministry to your church.

How many members of your church use e-mail regularly? Do they know about the FREE *BRweekly* e-newsletter?

Every Wednesday morning we send the *BRweekly* to anyone who signs up. This news piece is designed to call attention to some of the valuable highlights of the week's news. It's a *Readers Digest* of the news so you won't miss something important.

We know that pastors and church staff are busy. The same is true of most church members. So, let us help you. Ask your church family to sign up for the free *BRweekly*. Send your list of the names and email address of all who want to get this weekly update. Or go to BRnow.org/BRweekly and enter your name and email. Tell everyone in your Bible study group about this helpful resource.

We believe God is glorified when His church is strong, healthy and living out both the Great Commandment and the Great Commission. So, your *Biblical Recorder* staff works diligently to provide church leaders with accurate news, interesting stories and vital information to that end.

We inform church leaders so they can lead the church and community better. No other news source is doing what we

do. We inform church members and attenders so they will be strong Christian citizens in this challenging culture, and so they will be healthy, active supporters of the local church.

We belong to North Carolina Baptists and are accountable to you. Our board members are members of your churches all across the state. The news we report is tailored to meet the needs of our Baptist audience. We write from the perspective of a Christian worldview with a focus on the Great Commission. We report news about your Southern Baptist and North Carolina Baptist mission agencies, seminaries and related entities.

In short, we are here for you – at least for now. Please use us and let us serve you so we can remain a vital part of Kingdom work in challenging times. We want to serve you for many years to come.

Thank you for your partnership in the gospel.

For more information or help with any of the *Biblical Recorder* services described above, please contact our circulation manager, Liz Tablazon, at (919) 459-5693 or liz@BRnow.org. **BR**



Fire destroys historic Mount Holly church

By LIZ TABLAZON | *BR* staff writer

Another North Carolina congregation is grieving after a fire destroyed the sanctuary of First Baptist Church of Mount Holly July 21.

The Mount Holly Fire Department attempted to access the fire origin but were pulled from the building when flames grew. According to the department, the roof collapsed into the sanctuary, and crews worked to contain the fire and prevent it from reaching other parts of the church campus. Firefighters stayed at the location overnight to monitor the sanctuary. No injuries were reported.

The church held a worship service July 24 at Mount Holly's Grand Hall.

"We covet the prayers of the community and Christian brothers and sisters of all stripes, and we are overwhelmed at all those that have already sent words of support to us," Pastor

Kendell Cameron said in a statement to the *Biblical Recorder*. "We are especially thankful for those that have offered to share facilities with us."

An investigation is ongoing to determine the fire's cause and assess total damage to the campus. The sanctuary was built in 1924 and renovated in 1989. Church leaders have said they plan to rebuild the sanctuary. A cause for the fire is expected this week.

Cameron said, "We love our beautiful sanctuary, but we know ultimately that it is not First Baptist Church. First Baptist Church is the people who come to worship and who come to serve Christ together. Our hearts are indeed broken, but we will trust in the Savior who is our Rock and Redeemer to carry us through. We trust fully, and, like Abraham, we believe the Lord will provide."

A fire July 17 destroyed Cherry Grove Baptist Church's sanctuary in Cerro Gordo. See story, page 1. **BR**

**BR BIBLICAL
RECORDER**

(ISSN 0279-8182)

News Journal of the Baptist State Convention
of North Carolina
Founded 1833 by Thomas Meredith

Volume 182 No. 16
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BRnow.org

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Payable in advance. N.C. sales tax is included. Digital rates: \$5.99 (one year); \$10.99 (two years); \$15.99 (three years).

Publication

Published biweekly on Saturdays by *Biblical Recorder* Inc., 205 Convention Drive, Cary, NC 27511, as authorized by the Baptist State Convention in annual session at Winston-Salem, November 21-23, 1939.

Periodicals postage paid at Raleigh, NC 27676.

Postmaster

Send address changes to *Biblical Recorder* Inc., P.O. Box 1185, Cary, NC 27512-1185.

NCMO helps 'Prepare the Way' for Jesus

All across our state, nation and world, men, women and students are preparing the way for Jesus thanks to your support of the annual North Carolina Missions Offering (NCMO).

"Prepare the way" is the theme for this year's NCMO. When you go, pray and give to this offering, you are directly involved in preparing the way for Jesus.

All of the regular budget for N.C. Baptist Men, also known as Baptists on Mission, comes from the NCMO. Some of the ministries that the NCMO makes possible are disaster relief, two medical/dental buses, the new health screening ministry bus and mission camps in Shelby and Red Springs.

NCMO also provides numerous opportunities for individuals to serve on missions teams here in North Carolina, across the country and around the world in places like Honduras, Guatemala, Cuba, Armenia, Hungary, Romania, Ukraine and elsewhere.

Recently I was asked why we do the ministries that we do. My response was

"to glorify God and prepare the way for Jesus."

There are many verses in the Bible about glorifying God. In John 15:8 Jesus said, "My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be my disciples." In Luke 10:1, Jesus sends out the 72 "two by two to every town and place where he himself was about to go." Jesus sent them out to prepare the way for Him. In verse nine, Jesus told them how to prepare the way. He said don't worry about what you will eat or where you will stay. He instructed them to heal the sick and proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom.

Your investment in NCMO enables us to do as Jesus instructed. By caring for the physical needs of people, we prepare the way for Jesus to meet their spiritual needs, as well.

The volunteers who serve at our mission camps aren't just helping people, they are glorifying God and preparing the way. Volunteers serving on the medical, dental and health screening buses aren't just fixing teeth and checking blood pres-

sure, they are glorifying God and preparing the way.

Right now, the disaster relief volunteers who are working in flood-ravaged West Virginia aren't just helping people clean up and rebuild their homes. They are glorifying God and preparing the way for Jesus.

Through our national missions partnerships, volunteers in the Appalachian coalfields, Pennsylvania, Vermont, the Rocky Mountains and Hawaii are doing everything from leading Vacation Bible School and sports camps to construction and evangelism. But the greatest thing they are doing is preparing the way for Jesus. Around the world, volunteers are teaching English in Hungary, building a seminary in Cuba, and conducting sports and medical projects in Honduras and Guatemala. They aren't just building



homes for widows, they are building relationships with Jesus. You are a part of all of these things and so much more. Thank you for going, praying, and giving to the North Carolina Missions Offering.

(EDITOR'S NOTE – To learn more about the North Carolina Missions Offering, visit ncmissionsoffering.org. Richard Brunson serves as executive director of Baptists on Mission, also known as N.C. Baptist Men.) **BR**



RICHARD BRUNSON
Guest Column

10 ways to minister to police officers

If you've been paying attention to the recent news, you know that the police have been at the center of often difficult and sometimes controversial situations. Regardless of your opinions of some of the actions of police over the past week, we have an opportunity to minister to the vast number of great police officers who support us. Here are some ways your church might do so:

- **Find a church member or couple to head up a unique ministry to the police.** Ideally, look for someone who has had experience on a police force. If your church doesn't have that person, invite others to pray about leading the ministry.

- **Learn from officers in your congregation.** Talk to them. Listen to them. Learn about their pressures. Ask how you can pray for them. Invite them to share their burdens with a small group or the entire church. Send them out as your church's ambassadors to the community.

- **Pray for officers – and let them know you are.** God has ordained governing authorities to help keep order, and we need to pray for those who guard our safety (Rom 13:1, 1 Tim 2:1-3). If your church develops such a ministry, though, make sure your local police know of your prayer support. Build relationships as you pray.

- **Train your members to pray when they hear a siren.** The sound of a siren almost always means somebody needs help, and that others are rushing there to provide that help. Use the opportunity to pray for all the parties, including the police.



CHUCK LAWLESS
Guest Column

- **Get to know the local police chaplain.** Many departments have a volunteer chaplain who can serve as a liaison between your church and the local department. Developing a relationship with him or her will benefit your ministry to the officers.

- **Honor officers in a worship service.** Take the time to affirm them and pray for them. Invite the whole force, and trust God to burden some to attend. Everyone will benefit from their presence.

- **Reach out and minister to the local police station.** I've known churches that provided free meals, washed vehicles, and wrote "thank you" letters. Work with the local chaplain to find out what needs are apparent.

- **Sponsor a "Parents Night Out" for officers.** Make it easier for couples that live under daily stress to have time together. Provide the best, safest childcare possible.

- **Adopt a police officer.** Again working with the chaplain, your family can adopt an officer to pray for, send notes to, get to know, and love in Christ. Connecting with his or her family will also spread your witness and your influence.

- **Share the gospel with police you know.** After all, the gospel is the answer to everything.

(EDITOR'S NOTE – Chuck Lawless is dean and vice-president of graduate studies and ministry centers at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, where he also serves as professor of evangelism and missions. This blog originally appeared at ChuckLawless.com and is used with permission.) **BR**

MISTAKEN IDENTITY

Identify" has become a household word, from gender identity to identity theft.

Christians are also affected by identity issues. Though we embrace a biblical view of gender identity as humans created in God's image, do our lives reflect our identity as disciples?

Jesus knew how to handle identity issues as illustrated by the foot-washing scene in John 13.

Immediately preceding the Last Supper, Jesus laid aside His outer garments, tied a towel around His waist and began to wash the apostles' feet. This servant role was considered demeaning, beneath the role of a houseguest.

How could Jesus, the King of Kings, humiliate Himself and wash the dirty feet of 12 men?

The answer is in John 13:3: "Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands ... that he had come from God and was going back to God." Jesus knew who He was, where He was from and where He was going. He could serve others because He was secure in His

identity! This is true not only in this foot-washing scene but also in His entire earthly ministry, from when He left heaven to His death on the cross (Philippians 2:5-11).

How does this apply to us? It's not just transgendered people who struggle with identity confusion. We all do. Jesus found His identity in what the Father had done for Him, but we erroneously replace the source of our identity with what others think, approval of some earthly authority, our good or bad deeds, success or wealth. As disciples of Christ, our identity is found in Him. When we seek identity elsewhere, we hinder our ability to serve the Lord freely. Just as Jesus found His identity in His relationship with the Father, we should find our identity in Christ. We belong to Christ, and nothing we do changes our standing before Him.

(EDITOR'S NOTE – Brian Upshaw is the church health and revitalization team leader at the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. Contact (800) 395-5102, ext. 5632, or bupshaw@ncbaptist.org.)



BRIAN UPSHAW

New video series explores ‘Mission of God’

By CHAD AUSTIN | BSC Communications

A new video-based Bible study produced by the Peoples Next Door N.C. ministry of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC) aims to provide a biblical and theological foundation for reaching the nations around the world and right here at home.

The Mission of God is a free, six-session study that explores God’s desire to see the nations of the world come to faith in Christ and the mandate He gives to believers to go and reach them. The series is available for streaming or download at ncbaptist.org/missionofgod.

“God’s heart is for us to reach the nations of the world with the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ,” said Chuck Register, the BSC’s executive leader for church planting and missions partnerships who helped develop the series. “Across the grand narrative of scripture,



CHUCK REGISTER

God has one primary purpose – to bring glory unto Himself as the nations are reached with the gospel.”

In the video series, Mike Griffin, assistant professor of cross-cultural studies at Palm Beach Atlantic University, walks through the scriptures from Genesis to Revelation, showing God’s desire to see all of the earth’s people groups come to faith in Jesus Christ.

Each video is approximately 30- to 40-minutes long and includes both biblical teaching and thought-provoking discussion and reflection questions.

The series is designed so that it can be used in a number of ways, Register said.

The series could be used as a church-wide Bible study during Sunday or Wednesday night services, or it could be used by a Sunday School class or small group. Individuals may also utilize the series for personal study.

Pastors should also find the material beneficial for personal study or as an



MIKE GRIFFIN



aid in sermon preparation for messages related to God’s heart for the nations. Additional resources related to the Mission of God series, including a corresponding small group leader guide and student guides, will be released later this summer.

Register said many individuals from countries and lands that have little or no access to the gospel are now living right here in North Carolina. And while the Great Commission mandates that believers take the gospel to the ends of the earth, Register said God’s people have a tremendous opportunity to reach people here.

“What we’ve discovered in North Carolina is that the nations have now come to us,” Register said.

“As we think about God’s heart for the nations, we want to reach them wherever we find them.”

Peoples Next Door N.C. is a ministry designed to do just that – equip churches to discover, engage and disciple individuals from the unreached people groups in North Carolina.

The Mission of God video series is just one of several resources offered by Peoples Next Door N.C.

Other resources include a manual to assist individuals and churches to discover and engage people groups in their cities, articles and email newsletters that offer practical tips on engaging individuals from other backgrounds and beliefs and a prayer map of North Carolina that spotlights unreached people groups who live in different parts of the state. To learn more about Peoples Next Door N.C., visit peoplesnextdoornc.org.

“Seeing and understanding God’s heart for the nations that is revealed throughout the pages of Scripture should encourage and motivate us to be on mission for Him,” Register said. **BR**

FREE



DID YOU KNOW?

If you joined a North Carolina Baptist church in the past two years and came from a non-Baptist background, you are eligible for a free one-year subscription to the *Biblical Recorder*.

Many who join your church do not know who Baptists are, what we believe and how we cooperate for missions. Maybe they have no church background or they came to your church from a non-Baptist church. The best way to inform them is to give them a full year of regular news and information through the *Biblical Recorder*. It's free! Contact our circulation manager, Liz Tablazon, today, and she will help you get started: (919) 459-5693 or liz@bmow.org.

Are the new members of your church getting the *Biblical Recorder*?

CLI finds niche in prison ministry

By K. ALLAN BLUME | BR Editor

When Kathleen Skaar moved to Raleigh more than 20 years ago, she and her husband, Anders, did the “proper thing:” joined a church. Both admit they did not have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ at the time.

In April 1995 Skaar attended a church-sponsored women’s retreat. The speaker invited everyone that did not know Jesus personally to pray and commit their life to Him. Skaar gave her life to Christ that day. “My life changed pretty dramatically,” she said. “I began reading the Bible and Christian books. Every time I had a question, God would bring just the right book at just the right time. So I started thinking, wouldn’t it be great if people had the advantage of reading these books?”

The seeds of a unique ministry sprouted out of that question. Christian Library International (CLI) began very small as Skaar, founder and executive director of the ministry, looked for ways to make Bible study materials accessible to fellow Christians. She founded CLI as a way to share books with patrons in a local Young Men’s Christian Association in 1996. For several years she gathered books from church groups and individuals, and made them available to individuals and Bible study groups.

Something happened in 2002 that began to redirect the ministry’s focus. “We had some extra books, and we didn’t know what we were going to do with

them, so we decided to see if the prisons could use them,” Skaar explained.

Prison chaplains reacted immediately with much interest. “Everyone we talked to said, ‘You have no idea what an answer to prayer you are,’” said Skaar. “They don’t have funds for these materials, so this was a great blessing to them.”

CLI sent an increasing number of books to prison chaplains, but their staff began wondering what was happening to the books. So they began stamping each book with contact information.

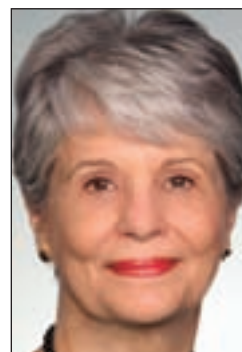
“We started getting all these letters from inmates saying how God was working through a particular book or how He was working in the prison,” Skaar said. “That was a great encouragement.”

Considering Henry Blackaby’s core statement in his book, *Experiencing God*, Skaar began to look “where God is working and join Him.” Applying that principle she realized God was working in the prisons.

“The Holy Spirit was working in ways far above average, so in 2006 we decided that we are a prison ministry, and we would put all of our resources in working with men and women in prisons.” Now the full strength of the ministry targets those who are incarcerated in the 5,000 prisons, jails and detention centers in the United States. CLI is currently sending materials to 1,450 correctional facilities. Some of the units have chaplains, but most do not have the resources to hire a chaplain.

CLI first operated out of the Skaar’s home, then moved to the facilities of Hillcrest Baptist Church in Raleigh. In

“Every time I had a question, God would bring just the right book at just the right time. So I started thinking, wouldn’t it be great if people had the advantage of reading these books?” – Kathleen Skaar



July the ministry moved into an office building in North Raleigh. The new facility provides adequate office space, a shipping department and room for volunteers. Letters pour into the CLI office every day from prisoners across the country. Each inmate receives a hand-written letter from a ministry volunteer that includes a personal response to Bible-related questions and prayer needs.

A bulletin board in the new office is packed with letters telling the stories of more than 600 inmates who trusted Christ as their Savior last year. One prisoner said, “letters to a prisoner are gold.” Inmates know that CLI will answer every letter. No one is unimportant.

As each person is contacted Skaar said, “We can connect them to a Bible study and start discipling them.”

A video tells the story of an inmate who had a bad relationship with his son, but was able to lead his own son to Christ. “It was only because of the discipleship program that I could do that,” the inmate explained.

“God’s Word, no matter what form, will always accomplish the purpose for which it was sent. It never returns void,” added Skaar.

CLI is supported by churches, individuals, foundations and publishers. Partners listed on their website include the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, Family Christian Stores, Lifeway Christian Stores and Prison Fellowship.

Many churches support CLI through book drives, financial gifts and volunteer support. The Summit Church, Providence Baptist Church and Bay Leaf Baptist Church are some of the ministry’s strong local partners. A church in the Atlanta area gives their largest support for prison outreach.

Will Gatling, associate pastor for missions at Bay Leaf, said the church supports CLI with a monetary gift each year and through church wide collections of books, tapes and materials annually. One recent book drive yielded 3,000 books.

“We’ve had a number of people that volunteer to serve at packing parties and other ways to help CLI,” he said. “It has been a great opportunity for our people to be involved in local ministry.”

Gatling served on the original CLI board of directors about 15 years ago. He said when the organization began doing prison ministry exclusively, “It’s like the world opened up to them and the ministry began to flourish. They’ve found a niche in ministry that I don’t know if anyone else does.”

Anders Skaar is a former executive recruiter who now serves as CLI’s communications director. He joined the ministry in 2002. They are members of Crossroads Fellowship. Kathleen Skaar has a bachelor of arts degree from the University of Florida, master’s degree in business administration from Meredith College and a master of divinity from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary.

CLI welcomes gently used Bibles, Christian books, CDs and DVDs from churches and individuals. Contact 4724 Hargrove Rd., Ste. 100, Raleigh, NC 27616, or (919) 790-6987. Visit the website: CLI.world. **BR**

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Boot Camp explores biblical, practical foundations for worship

By CHAD AUSTIN | BSC Communications

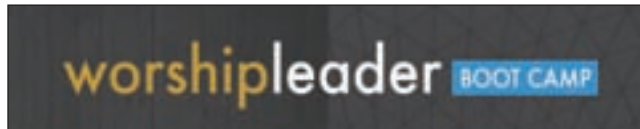
Pastor Phillip Reynolds has seen firsthand how transforming worship can transform a church. With his congregation at First Baptist Church of Hickory divided over worship styles and uncertain about the future direction of the church, Reynolds reached out to Kenny Lamm, senior worship consultant with the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC).

“One of our staff pastors had attended the regional Worship Leader Boot Camp conducted right here at our church,” Reynolds said. “Acting as host of the event, this staff pastor had participated in the boot camp and knew it was just what we needed as a church body.”

In early 2015, Lamm began meeting with First Baptist Hickory’s leadership team. A few months later, he led about 200 members of the congregation through some of the same material that’s presented in one of Lamm’s Worship Leader Boot Camps.

“That is the evening that got us to where we thought we were to where God wanted us to be,” Reynolds said.

Lamm hopes that other congregations can see God move in a similar way in churches across the state following the next Worship Leader Boot Camp, scheduled



for Aug. 26-27 at Peninsula Baptist Church in Mooresville, just outside of Charlotte. The event is designed to equip worship leaders and pastors with a biblical foundation for worship, while providing practical tools and resources for churches to experience worship renewal.

“When people leave our worship experiences, we don’t want them talking about the great music or the great worship team,” Lamm said. “We want them talking about how they had a transforming encounter with the God of this universe.”

In addition to the teaching and training sessions, the boot camp includes times of worship for attendees throughout the weekend. The boot camp explores a variety of issues that impact corporate worship today and offers practical, hands-on training. All attendees at the August boot camp will receive a revised edition of Lamm’s worship leader handbook, which includes updated resources and access to other exclusive content.

Lamm said the boot camp will emphasize moving congregations from passive spectators to active participants in worship and seeking God’s direction for

worship approaches and practices in one’s specific local church context.

“It’s a great time to dream God-sized visions for your worship ministry,” Lamm said.

Early-bird registration for the event is available through Aug. 8 at a cost of \$25 per person. After Aug. 8, the registration fee increases to \$30. Walk-up registration on the day of the event is \$40. More information about the boot camp, including online registration, is available at worshipmooreville.org.

Reynolds said the instruction and training offered at Worship Leader Boot Camp is valuable for worship leaders and pastors.

“We are very thankful to the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina or making this available to churches,” Reynolds said. “It has been an exciting experience for our church.”

Want to go?

- **What:** Worship Leader Boot Camp
- **When:** Friday and Saturday, Aug. 26-27
- **Where:** Peninsula Baptist Church, Mooresville
- **Cost:** \$25 per person through Aug. 8. \$30 after Aug. 8. \$40 at the door.
- **Info:** worshipmooreville.org **BR**

Russian religion law said to ‘undercut’ missions

By DANIEL WOODMAN | Baptist Press

A new Russian law that prohibits evangelism and preaching outside state-sanctioned sites reminds New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary professor Jake Roudkovski of his days as a youth in the Soviet Union.

“Baptist churches in Russia will survive” the law signed by Russian President Vladimir Putin July 6 that took effect July 20, Roudkovski, associate professor of evangelism and pastoral leadership, told Baptist Press. Such oppression “is nothing new to them. ... They will stay faithful to the gospel.”

Still, the law “will significantly undercut all of the missionary activities,” though it “will not stop [missions and evangelism] altogether,” said Roudkovski, who left the Soviet Union at age 17 but has returned on mission trips.

The law, part of a package of anti-terrorism measures, will amend a 1997 Russian religion law to ban preaching, praying, proselytizing and disseminating religious materials outside state-sanctioned religious sites, according to a news release from the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF).

Russians who share their faith or distribute certain types of religious messages through mass print, broadcast or online media may face fines up to \$15,000. Under the law, foreign missionaries must prove they were invited by state-registered religious groups and must operate only in regions where their

sponsoring organizations are registered. Missionary groups found in violation face deportation and major fines, according to USCIRF.

Jerry Johnson, president of National Religious Broadcasters (NRB), said the new law “should be a matter of grave concern and prayerful action by Christians of all nations.”

“Following a pattern of other human rights abuses, Vladimir Putin’s Russia is criminalizing a central duty for all followers of Christ – sharing our faith. In keeping with the Apostle Peter’s declaration, ‘We must obey God rather than men’ (Acts 5:29), I commend the faithfulness of Russia’s evangelical Christians and urge believers across the world earnestly to seek God’s protection for all those who are being faithful in their witness,” Johnson said in an NRB news release.

There has been resistance to the law, according to Forum 18, an organization that monitors religious liberty violations in the former Soviet Union.

Russia’s Baptist Council of Churches published an open letter of protest to Putin, reminding him the government refused to support earlier attempts to restrict the sharing of beliefs. Legislators responsible for the bill did not seek the views of competent experts or the opinions of believers, the letter stated according to Forum 18.

Igor Yanshin, a lawyer and member of a Pentecostal church in Siberia, created an online petition in an attempt to persuade Putin to turn back the bill. After 25,000 people signed the petition

in three days, he sent it to Putin on June 29 via the Kremlin website. The petition remains active and reached 37,000 signatures by July 4, Forum 18 reported.

(EDITOR’S NOTE – Daniel Woodman, who will be a junior journalism major at the University of Missouri, is a summer intern with Baptist Press.) **BR**



BRIEFS

GOP passes pro-life, conservative platform

(Baptist Press) The Republican National Convention approved a strongly conservative platform – including what was described as its most pro-life stance ever – on an opening day marked by charges of plagiarism and a failed effort by delegates opposed to Donald Trump.

Voting July 17 in Cleveland, GOP delegates endorsed a platform that supports biblical/traditional marriage and the right to life of unborn children while opposing the Obama administration’s new transgender directive to public schools. Confirming Donald Trump as its nominee, GOP delegates heard from numerous leaders, including the vice presidential candidate Indiana Gov. Mike Pence.

Trump’s candidacy has divided not only Republicans but Southern Baptists and other evangelicals. Some Southern Baptists and other evangelicals have supported Trump in the primaries or plan to vote for him in the general election as an alternative to presumptive Democratic nominee Hillary Clinton; others have declared their opposition will continue through the general election.

LifeWay adds student events in urban ministry

(LifeWay Christian Resources) Infusion, a new summer event from LifeWay Students, has been announced for 2017 to immerse participants in ministry within urban contexts. The six-day Infusion events next summer – joining World Changers, PowerPlant and LifeWay’s other student opportunities – will be educational and missions experiences, said Dave MacNeill of LifeWay Students.

“Infusion Missions involves students in hands-on experiences related to social justice and felt needs,” he said. “Infusion will excel in educating students on how the gospel addresses the believer’s responsibility to be aware of and involved in social justice.”

As awareness of social justice issues increases, many millennials and members of Generation Z are trending away from traditional mission trips, MacNeill said, noting that Infusion will seek to connect evangelism with meeting the needs of individuals. In 2017, teams will choose from six different week-long events in three cities: Atlanta, Memphis and Philadelphia. During the events, students will have the opportunity to live, eat, worship and minister outside their everyday context. Visit InfusionMissions.com.

McDonald’s implements porn filter at U.S. stores

(Baptist Press) The McDonald’s corporation’s decision to filter pornography from Wi-Fi at its U.S. restaurants has been called “brave and bold” by the leader of Southern Baptists’ anti-pornography campaign.

“I applaud McDonald’s for this brave and bold step of protecting people, especially children, from the evil that hovers over every place that offers Wi-Fi,” Jay Dennis, co-sponsor of the Join One Million Men Campaign, told Baptist Press (BP).

In response to a petition drive launched by the Internet safety organization Enough Is Enough (EIE) in 2014, McDonald’s began filtering pornography and child pornography at its U.S. corporate-owned restaurants earlier this year, according to a July 13 EIE news release. The filtering service has been made available to McDonald’s franchises as well. U.K. McDonald’s locations have provided internet filters since at least 2014, according to previous BP reports. Chick-fil-A and Panera Bread are among other U.S. restaurant chains with porn-free Wi-Fi, EIE reported.

Starbucks, which filters pornography at its U.K. stores as well, was also targeted by the EIE petition drive but has not responded to the request for protected internet access in American stores, EIE reported.

Turkey leader’s social media counters coup

(Baptist Press) Turkey’s Islamist-leaning president, Tayyip Erdogan, survived a July 15 coup by narrowly escaping a band of soldiers at a coastal resort and then launching “a counteroffensive that marshaled military might, technology and religion,” as described by *Wall Street Journal* reporters.

The coup attempt failed, leaving more than 250 people dead and 2,800 military personnel detained for questioning, as estimated by *The Journal* on July 17, while the BBC placed the number of overall detainees as climbing past 6,000.

The coup attempt likely will strengthen Erdogan’s grip on power in the nation of 75 million people. Though democratically elected as president in 2014, international religious liberty advocates have been wary of Erdogan since.

As noted in the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom’s 2016 report: “The overall landscape for democracy and human rights in Turkey has deteriorated over the last several years.”

Full stories available online at BRnow.org.

NewSpring names interim; Perry Noble speaks via Facebook

Baptist Courier/Baptist Press

Clayton King, a ministry leader and teaching pastor at NewSpring Church in South Carolina, is serving as the multi-site church’s interim after the termination of founding pastor Perry Noble. Noble, in a Facebook video June 13, stated, “I am sorry that I allowed a dependency on alcohol. I ran to it other than Jesus for my comfort, and that was wrong ... and I am going to do whatever it takes to make it right.

“I am checking into a treatment facility and going to work with some excellent people who are really going to help me take my next steps. I’m serious about fighting for my wife and my daughter and I’m serious about following Jesus.”

Noble, 45, encouraged members to stay committed to NewSpring, stating with emphasis in the 3-plus-minute video, “I. Still. Love. My. Church. ... The leadership of NewSpring Church made the right decision. God has gotten my attention. ... I’m not bitter. I’m focused on getting better.” Noble’s termination was announced to the church on Sunday, July 10.

The naming of King as NewSpring’s

interim senior pastor “has been lauded by many Christian leaders across the state and may ensure that NewSpring will avoid a significant attendance drop, which many churches often face following the departure of a longtime pastor,” the *Baptist Courier* newsjournal noted in a July 12 article.

NewSpring, South Carolina’s largest church, has 17 campuses across the state, with the latest, in Clemson, slated to open this fall. King, a North Carolina native, is president of Clayton King Ministries and Crossroads Summer Camps, a nonprofit evangelism and discipleship ministry based at Anderson University. He and his staff have been leading Crossroads Summer youth camps for 21 years, with an anticipated attendance of 5,000 teens during one of this summer’s seven weeks of camp. By the end of week 4, Crossroads had recorded 600 campers’ spiritual decisions for Christ.

King also holds the position of distinguished professor of evangelism at Anderson University. He is the author of 14 books and he and his wife Sharie are involved in LifeWay Christian Resources’ relaunch of the “True Love Waits” abstinence-until-marriage initiative. **BR**

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Podcast gives ‘fuller picture’ of SBC

By ERIN ROACH | Baptist Press

For more than a year, the “SBC This Week” podcast hosted by Amy Whitfield and Jonathan Howe has delivered a weekly roundup of news and views from around the Southern Baptist Convention, featuring stories from Baptist Press and other outlets as well as interviews with Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) newsmakers.

A new podcast is available each Friday at sbcthisweek.com and via subscription.

Whitfield is director of communications at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C., and made history as the first woman parliamentarian at the SBC annual meeting in St. Louis in June. Howe is director of strategic initiatives at LifeWay Christian Resources in Nashville and runs LifeWay president Thom Rainer’s podcast, “Rainer on Leadership.”

“SBC This Week” grew out of an ongoing mutual interest in the Southern Baptist Convention, Howe told Baptist Press (BP).

“We were already having regular discussions centered on news and events in the Southern Baptist world, so we began exploring the idea of recording those discussions,” Howe said. “We kicked off with the first episode in May 2015 leading up to the convention in Columbus and have just kept on going.”

Whitfield and Howe interact on the podcast via video call.

SBC This Week is a resource to get more Southern Baptists involved in the united effort of the convention, Whitfield said.

“For years, conversations about the SBC have been more active in the weeks leading up to our annual meeting,” Whitfield told BP. “This makes sense as we get ready to gather and do the work of the messengers.”

“But the reality is, the work of Southern Baptists is happening all year long through our entities and our churches. We think it’s important to be conversing about this all the time, because we are cooperating all the time,” Whitfield said. “A weekly wrap-up allows people to stay engaged in the process and not only understand what’s going on in the SBC but why it’s happening as well.”

Each episode is accompanied by show notes that push out to podcast players such as iTunes and Downcast, and the notes are available on the website as well. They contain links to each story the hosts discuss.

“We track multiple news outlets and social media platforms – Baptist Press, state papers, official releases from entities and much more,” Howe said. “We also have personal contacts and listeners from around the convention who let us know about news we might otherwise miss.”

As for the types of material the hosts select for the



AMY WHITFIELD



JONATHAN HOWE

A light in mountains of darkness

“It is easy to understand their suspicion considering that to a large degree we look like their conquerors,” said Lynn Frankland, Wrightsboro Baptist Church’s field strategy coordinator. “They’ve heard a lot of myths about us over the years. Another issue is that evangelicals have a history of showing up, creating changes, disappearing and never coming back. That’s what they expect. Part of building trust is showing them that we are committed to them.” (Photo by Chris Turner)

By CHRIS TURNER | Tennessee Baptist Convention

Julissa knelt beside her daddy and urged him to get back on the donkey. He’d collapsed by the side of the road, torso in the bushes, legs and feet stretched out into the dusty mountain road.

“C’mon Papi. We need to go home.”

But he was barely conscious and unable to move, a stupor brought on from a morning of heavy drinking.

Julissa’s plight is not that uncommon from many other children living in the isolated Andean Mountains of Peru where there is a high level of alcoholism among men. Much of the bacchanalia centers around the veneration of Catholic saints, such as Saint Ursula, who is the patron saint of the town of Viraco (vee-RAH-co), are located in the shadows of the dormant volcano, Coropuna.

Saint Ursula is uniquely recognizable. Most female Catholic saints have crowns atop their heads. Not Ursula. She wears a cowgirl hat. Legend has it that Ursula appeared to the Inca people here in the 1500s to warn them of an impending Spanish ambush. The people rallied and defeated the Spanish, solidifying Ursula’s significance in perpetuity.

Far from being a protector, however, she is a slave owner, the visual representation of the spiritual bondage that shackles these Inca descendants who are scattered like lost sheep among the massively imposing mountains. Eventually, the Spanish conquered their ancestors and imposed Catholicism as an alternative to death. Most took the deal, but more than five centuries later, if you scratch the surface of this brand of Catholicism, you find a commitment to the animistic worship of the sun, earth, moon, and stars. The Inca religion is alive and well and creates an odd mix with Catholic traditionalism that often manifests itself in these drunken celebrations that invite vast numbers from across the countryside.

“The prevailing attitude is fear,” said Greg Danford, a volunteer stateside strategy coordinator from Wrightsboro Baptist Church, working to spread the gospel in this region. Wrightsboro is one church of a small partnership of churches that have adopted this area and these people. There is currently a weak evangelical presence at best, and the few Christians here face persecution and crave discipleship.

“The fear comes from the control the priests hold over the people and from the superstition related to the mix of religions,” Danford said. “Christians who don’t participate in the rituals and celebrations face reprisals such as the irrigation water to their crops being cut off.”

Danford was part of a five-man hiking team trekking to about 10 remote villages seeking to better understand the spiritual and physical needs of the people. It’s a grueling exercise to get to these isolated locations connected by rugged trails and elevation changes of several thousand feet. Given the vastness, Danford’s team looked like a band of marching ants against the backdrop of imposing mountains.

But beyond the isolation, another challenge of working here is overcoming the suspicion people have of outsiders, especially Caucasians.

“It is easy to understand their suspicion considering that to a large degree we look like their conquerors,” said Lynn Frankland, Wrightsboro’s field strategy coordinator. “They’ve heard a lot of myths about us over the years. Another issue is that evangelicals have a history of showing up, creating changes, disappearing and never coming back. That’s what they expect. Part of building trust is showing them that we are committed to them.”

Information gathered on the trip will be used to develop a strategy for enhancing that commitment. The number of people professing Christ in these scattered little villages is miniscule by comparison to non-Christians. Both Danford and Frankland said that it is

See Podcast page 11

See Darkness page 16

Motion well taken: Connecting *Robert's Rules* to the Great Commission

By **SETH BROWN** | BR Content Editor

An unnamed gentleman sat low in his chair at the 2016 Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) annual meeting in St. Louis, Mo. His event program tumbled to the floor as the churchman's arms hung limp by his side. Soft snores communicated to nearby messengers, "The business meeting is now in session."

The man's sleepy demeanor symbolizes the way many Southern Baptists feel about the denomination's deliberative process: "Can't we get on with more exciting things, like the Great Commission?"

The *Biblical Recorder* interviewed four of the SBC's current parliamentarians to see if the allegedly boring yearly procedures – along with the infamous guidebook, *Robert's Rules of Order* – are a vital part of Southern Baptist life, or just dead weight.

"Not all of it is exciting," admitted SBC Chief Parliamentarian Barry McCarty. "Some of it seems rather routine, but the fact is the annual meeting is what enables the SBC to function."

"Southern Baptists for years have fielded the largest missionary force in the world."

The yearly parliamentary session is the "vital connection" between the churches that fund and direct missionary efforts and the entities that enable them.

"Robert's Rules of Order helps the Southern Baptist Convention do its Great Commission work," said McCarty.

Economic polity

Not only does parliamentary procedure have the ability to harness the energy and resources of nearly 50,000 SBC churches across the nation, said the parliamentarians, guidelines like Robert's Rules keep the convention moving forward while providing guardrails against both tyranny and chaos.

"There will be some set of rules that govern every meeting," McCarty said. "Even if you have a dominant chairman who says, 'Forget the bylaws, these are my laws.'"

Organizations, especially large ones, need an objective set of standards that protect the right of the majority to make decisions and the right of the minority to be heard.

"I love the fact that our denomination is not a hierarchical denomination," said Amy Whitfield, who was appointed in 2016 as the SBC's first female parliamentarian. "It's the churches that are making decisions ... That is my favorite thing about how our deliberative body works."

Adam Greenway, also appointed in



Amy Whitfield, from left, Craig Culbreth, Ronnie Floyd, Barry McCarty and Adam Greenway rely on Robert's Rules of Order to keep the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting running smoothly. (Twitter photo)

2016 as part of a newly recruited parliamentary team, echoed Whitfield's sentiment, "We're committed to a robust and vibrant congregationalism. ... The genius of the SBC is the fact that any messenger can go to any microphone and make a motion." Greenway developed his parliamentary skills with the Kentucky Baptist Convention for more than six years.

Craig Culbreth said, "It allows everybody's voice to be heard, even when they're not in the room." Culbreth has served as an SBC parliamentarian since 2010, but has also worked with the Florida Baptist Convention for many years, along with other state conventions and associations.

At least one well-known Baptist leader challenged the democratic ideal during the 2016 annual meeting. Paul Pressler, one of the architects of the Conservative Resurgence, raised a point of order accusing the chair of unfairly denying him the opportunity to speak to a resolution under consideration.

The chair of the meeting, then-president Ronnie Floyd, ruled the point of order "not well taken," which means the accusation was denied and no rules violation had occurred. Greenway explained the ruling, "The system is fair ... There is an electronic microphone ordering box. It is a blind system. ... It is purely based on the order in which they register, and depending upon the order of precedence in what they are attempting to do, in terms of an amendment, motion or point of order."

He added, "I would reject any sense in which there is bias or preferential treatment."

McCarty agreed, "Every messenger has the same right as every other messenger. That's a good thing for people to see."

Greenway said, "Even if you don't

agree with the decisions, there should be a strong affirmation that things are done with integrity, objectivity and clarity."

In fact, the integrity of the process was the hot button issue when the SBC first hired McCarty as a professional parliamentarian in 1986. The Conservative Resurgence drew its fair share of critics, and a number of lawsuits were filed claiming that certain organizational procedures fell outside the bounds of the convention's governing documents. McCarty has advised SBC leaders and messengers for 30 years so that each parliamentary maneuver follows proper guidelines and takes place in accordance with the bylaws.

Fair and orderly

Culbreth pointed to the high-profile SBC presidential election between Steve Gaines, J.D. Greear and David Crosby at the 2016 annual meeting as another example of a fair system at work. The initial vote gave way to a runoff between the top two candidates, Gaines and Greear. After the second round of votes were cast, officials were still unable to declare a winner due to a number of ballots that were incorrectly marked or submitted, preventing either candidate from achieving the requisite majority (more than half).

Debate sprang up immediately in the convention hall and on social media about the tallying procedure. Parliamentarians and denominational legal counsel pointed to the convention's bylaws and parliamentary procedure as the basis for how the ballots were counted. Questions about the tallies were quickly overshadowed when Greear withdrew before a third vote was taken, allowing Gaines to receive the election by acclamation.

Despite the controversy, Culbreth thought it was good for messengers to see an objective set of guidelines in

action. "Thankfully there was a fair system," he said, noting how tight the runoff vote had been. "There weren't just good ole' boys in the back room that said, 'Hey, he's close enough, we'll give it to him.'"

The SBC annual meeting is one of the largest deliberative bodies in the world. That makes it particularly susceptible to disorder, especially because of its bottom-up polity.

"It'd be a nightmare not to have the best possible set of rules of order to conduct meetings that are that large and that complicated," McCarty said.

He referred to Robert's Rules as "the sound principles of a fair and orderly meeting that have long existed among English speaking peoples."

Greenway was quick to point out, "Robert's Rules of Order is not the Bible. It's not on the same level of authority as the Bible, but it certainly does provide a useful service in helping us do what we do ... allowing God's people to make the decisions about our work."

He also emphasized that "Parliamentarians don't rule on anything. Our role is purely an advisory role. ... It is the messengers' convention, and those of us who are parliamentarians are servants of the convention."

Roll call

Anecdotal evidence suggests that newer churches are trending away from using Robert's Rules in their business meetings, even if they are congregational in polity.

Culbreth agreed, "The typical Baptist church doesn't have business meetings like they used to." This pattern could produce a future where a growing number of Baptist messengers to the annual meeting are unfamiliar with the decision making process.

The SBC parliamentarians suggested that messengers familiarize themselves with parliamentary procedure and convention bylaws.

"Engagement is about showing up," said Whitfield, "and if you're going to show up, you have to know what you're showing up for. You need to educate yourself. It's essential to staying engaged in the process."

Though they advocated for greater knowledge and involvement, none of the interviewed parliamentarians said it was necessary to memorize Robert's Rules. The book runs nearly 700 pages. They did, however, name a few simpler resources.

The first was McCarty's book, *A Parliamentary Guide for Church Leaders*. Greenway said it should be "mandatory reading"

See Rules page 16

N.C. churches respond to tragedies, racial tension

Two black men from Louisiana and Minnesota were shot to death by police officers in early July, followed immediately by retaliatory attacks in Texas and Louisiana on law enforcement officers that killed eight and wounded many more. The series of back-to-back tragedies left the nation in shock, wondering if racial healing is possible.

The *Biblical Recorder* reached out to a number of North Carolina churches to discover what practical steps they have taken to help reconcile racial differences in their congregations and communities. Here are their responses:

Gerald Hodges, lead pastor, Westwood Baptist Church, Roxboro

Like most Southern Baptist churches in our community, Westwood is primarily a Caucasian congregation, although we do have some members who are African-American. We also have several law enforcement officers who are active members of our congregation, including our city's Chief of Police. And the neighborhood adjacent to Westwood is a mobile home community made up predominantly of African-American families. So the events in Minnesota, Louisiana and Dallas hit close to home for many in our church family.

We did not have to scramble to plan a response to that difficult week. God had already planned it for us. I did not need to pick out a special passage for the sermon. We are currently working our way through the book of Isaiah. In Isaiah 32, the text that Sunday, we saw that before a society can be fundamentally transformed, the people living in that society must be inwardly transformed. No human government or special interest group can bring about this change. One of our elders led in a special time of prayer for the families of all those who had lost their lives in Minnesota, Louisiana and Texas, and for those communities.

For many years our church has worked to improve our relationship with our neighbors, believing that our call to make disciples begins right at our back door by building personal relationships and sharing the gospel with the individuals and families who live closest to us.

In addition to our church's efforts, officers from the Person County Sheriff's Department organized a special community-wide prayer service. It was held at the county office building and was well attended by many local law enforcement officers, Highway Patrol, emergency responders and local citizens. Next week our Police Department will partner with a local African-American congregation to host a "Community Cookout & Conversation." We look forward to participating in that event and pray for God to use it to bring reconciliation and healing to our community. We are praying that *"the effect of righteousness will be peace, and the result of righteousness, quietness and trust forever"* (Isaiah 32:17).



Byron Greene, senior pastor, Highland Baptist Church, Raleigh

Highland responded to the recent shootings by immediately posting passages of scripture (Matthew 5:9, 38) on social media that convey reconciliation and peace.

My message on Sunday first acknowledged the loss of all innocent life due to the shootings and the growing grief caused by the violence. I intentionally recognized our having several members of the law enforcement community, along with their families, that serve the public. I revealed their personal fear and confusion.

The heart of the morning message acknowledged the decline of society being partly due to our treatment of the church and our not being the church as instructed. We left with a call to commitment. Galatians 5:22-26 was our lead passage.

In recent days I have reached out to one of our area African-American congregations and area law enforcement officials desiring to come together for prayer and fellowship.



Kelly Bullard, senior pastor, Temple Baptist Church, Fayetteville

On the Sunday morning following the events in Louisiana and Minnesota we joined together with several churches in our community for a morning prayer gathering, prior to our individual worship services. This was a sweet and emotional time of prayer and fellowship with our brothers and sisters, across ethnic and denominational lines. During our Sunday morning worship service we were privileged to have Fayetteville City Police Chief Harold Medlock worship with us. He shared briefly about the work he and his officers are doing in our city, and how our congregation can pray for and support them. We also recognized officers, fire fighters and other first responders that were present in our service. We had a time of focused prayer for these men and women, as well as their families.

In addition, I am always amazed of God's timing as it relates to human affairs and my sermon series. I have been preaching through Ephesians this summer and I found myself on July 10 in Ephesians 3:1-12, dealing with the Paul's explanation of the mystery of the gospel and its accessibility to both Jew and Gentile. Paul's words in Ephesians 2-3 remind us that all barriers of division between God and man, as well as man and man, have been brought down through Jesus Christ. I challenged our congregation to live missional lives for Jesus, building bridges to all peoples, regardless of race or socio-economic status.



Ed Tablazon, pastor, Triad Journey Church, Winston-Salem

As a pastor of an Asian church, I am beginning to realize that when there are issues like these, we tend to do nothing. To some degree we think that this is not our issue. But the presence of second-generation immigrants both in our homes and in our church lets us see these issues in new ways. Honestly, this was the

first Sunday ever that I addressed this issue from the pulpit. When things like this happen, I usually say a couple of words and pray for it, but last Sunday was a bit different. The following were thoughts I said last Sunday:

How should we respond to the painful events of the past week?

1. Pray! Pray for healing, healing for our nation; healing for those that have been wounded in the shooting; emotional healing for those who lost loved ones and friends and others who are hurting; these events affect hundreds if not thousands of people in many ways.

2. Know! Many of us Asians have no idea how deep and

complex this issue is. From a biblical perspective, this is the impact of sin: prejudice. Sin causes us to see what is visible while the Lord sees the heart (1 Samuel 16:7), and we are all guilty of this sin. Every human being is created in the image of God (Genesis 1:27) regardless of the color of his skin, economic background or race. We, the first generation Asian immigrants, have little idea about the roots of racial discrimination. We need to know, or our silence and indifference make us guilty as well!

3. Engage! Rather than quickly giving our opinion on the matter, let us begin to engage others in conversation to broaden our horizon, begin to understand the issues involved, and biblically address effective solutions for God's glory and our good.

Strachan resigns council; Burk named as replacement

Baptist Press

Biblical studies professor Denny Burk has been elected president of the Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood (CBMW), an organization that helps believers understand and apply the Bible's teaching on sexuality and gender.

Burk, whose election was announced July 20, is a faculty member of Boyce College at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., and director of the undergraduate school's Center for Gospel and Culture.

His desire to address gender issues stems in part

from his work as an associate pastor at Kenwood Baptist Church in Louisville, Burk told Baptist Press (BP).

"I've already had church members wondering what they're supposed to do and how they're supposed to think about coworkers who are entering into same-sex marriages and who are transitioning to some sort of a transgender identity," Burk said.

Burk's vision for CBMW includes reaffirming the organization's bedrock belief that men and women are fundamentally equal and have been assigned distinct roles in the church and the home, a belief known as complementarianism and articulated in one of CBMW's founding documents, the Danvers Statement of 1987.

Burk will continue in his role at Boyce in Louisville, where CBMW also is headquartered. He succeeds Owen Strachan, who became CBMW executive director in 2012 and president in 2014.

Strachan, a Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary professor, announced his resignation in June, citing a need "to step back" from "filling two vocational roles" simultaneously. A theological debate this summer regarding the relationship between God the Father and God the Son – a debate that has included criticism of CBMW – "played no part" in Strachan's decision to resign, he told BP in an email. Strachan will continue to serve CBMW as a senior fellow. **BR**

Calls Continued from page 1

more diverse than many of us realize. Tonight we got to see there's not simply one race represented among Southern Baptist churches in this region, across N.C. and across this convention. ... the unity that we have centered in Christ moves beyond the differences that we have culturally or racially. We can show that in a tangible way in a gathering like this."

Randy White, NSRBA's associational missionary, led the group of church representatives in a moving time of intercessory prayer during the service. Huddled in small clusters, attendees prayed through a portion of Isaiah chapter six, asking for a renewed vision of God and pleading for peace and unity in the midst of racial unrest.

Page said before the meeting began, "It's time for churches to realize they need to be stronger than ever before in community involvement. ... Our churches need to be at the forefront with a prophetic voice and community based ministry that makes a difference."

Military ministry

Fort Bragg, an army installation that hosts more than 50,000 active duty personnel, sits near the northern border of the NSRBA. Many ministries in the area are heavily influenced by the presence of such a high concentration of military service men and women. Fields said Sperring Memorial's congregation is 80 percent active and retired military.

"It's like pastoring a parade, because they come and they go," said Page, who previously pastored in the area.

Fields holds a simple philosophy for ministering next door to Fort Bragg. "I

give them the Word of God, and I love them," he said. "That's all I got, and that's enough."

When asked what churches with military focused ministries can do to serve the community, Page said, "You establish relationships as quickly and deeply as you can. There are huge stresses on the family. So, churches in any military community ... need to have family ministry."

Local cooperation

As the packed sanctuary emptied after the meeting, Kinlaw emphasized the work of local associations.

"Our cooperative work together is more crucial than ever," he said. "As the challenges are growing, as the needs are increasing, we can do more together than we can alone."

The *Recorder* asked Page if he thought the role of local associations is changing. Page answered, "Well, I don't think it is. I know it is. This is happening not just in N.C., but around the nation."

"Some associations have unfortunately failed in their understanding that they exist to serve the church and not vice versa. There are associations however that do understand they exist for the church, and they provide a wonderful and powerful ministry."

Page emphasized near the end of his sermon, "Friends, we are in a serious, serious situation. Our country is a mess. Black people fighting white people. White people fighting black people. ... Everybody's pointing fingers. We're in a mess, and inside the church we're doing no better. ... It's time to get serious about the gospel." **BR**

Pokémon Go craze drawing gamers to church

By **TOBIN PERRY** | Baptist Press

Pastor Dave Dolphin knew little about Pokémon Go before seeing his church's middle school pastor surrounded by several boys with phones out on a recent Sunday discovering the new phenomenon that would capture the world's imagination.

It wouldn't be the last time Dolphin, the executive pastor of Trinity Baptist Church of Yukon, Okla., would see people wandering around the church property staring at smartphones. As a Pokémon Go "gym," the church has become a go-to place in the community for the game's players of all ages. Instead of running from the growing craze, Dolphin says the church is embracing it – by letting players know they are welcome through social media and potentially providing refreshment for players who stop by in the coming days.

The church's youth also planned a time where they search for Pokémon together.

"Everything can be something you can leverage to turn people toward the gospel," Dolphin said. "Think about your neighbors that live around you. Your first conversation with them probably won't be about the sin in their life. It's going to be about a football game or a basketball game or how they get their lawn to look a certain way. You begin the relationship that way. From there you can turn the conversation – maybe not at that moment but the next – to the gospel. On top of that, I think it's interesting how many churches seem to be Pokestops or gyms."



Now you have people on your property who are coming there to play this game, and it's an easy conversation to start."

Like Trinity Baptist, Southern Baptist churches throughout the United States encountered the Pokémon Go phenomenon as players visited their properties to search for digital characters, called Pokémon, and engage in battles.

In just over a week after its July 6 release, the smartphone-based game has become the most popular mobile game in American history, according to research by SurveyMonkey. Only Google Maps and Snapchat get more daily users. According to media reports, the game is available right now in the United States, United Kingdom, Germany, Australia and New Zealand.

The game, the newest iteration of the nearly 20-year-old Pokémon franchise, engages players in an "augmented reality" where they try to find and capture Pokémon hidden throughout the real world. The Australian Business Review has suggested that it may be a "watershed moment" in the development of virtual reality.

(EDITOR'S NOTE – Tobin Perry is a freelance writer living in Evansville, Ind.) **BR**

Podcast Continued from page 8



show, Howe said they try to cover issues that appeal to a wide range of Southern Baptists.

"Also, as the SBC continues to diversify, we realize the importance for us to use this platform to highlight women and minorities in the convention who otherwise may not have an outlet to share their stories," Howe said. "We've intentionally sought out women and ethnic leaders as interview guests to underscore the importance of leadership diversity in the convention."

Interview guests have included the three nominees for SBC president this year as well as missions leader David Platt and others.

Whitfield said she particularly enjoys researching for the segment "This Week in SBC History."

"There are some amazing digital resources in the Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives and the IMB archives, from SBC annuals to Baptist Press issues to missionary publications," Whitfield said.

"I've tried to hit different eras in the history of our denomination, just to paint a fuller picture of where we have been at different times. It has been eye opening to

see how Southern Baptists were processing events at the moment they were happening in history, and it opens great doors for understanding and conversation."

The podcast also includes a "Resource of the Week" segment in which the hosts each highlight a book, website or other tool.

SBC This Week listeners can subscribe to Data.Point, a weekly email which debuted July 5 and provides a brief statistical analysis behind an SBC issue, such as, "Of the 903 SBC churches that closed in 2013, 89% were located in communities with population bases greater than 10,000."

What they've found since starting the podcast, Whitfield said, is that "there are Southern Baptists everywhere who like to have these conversations as much as we do."

"That's been my biggest surprise," she said. "There are men and women from all over the SBC who are interested in every level of denominational life, and that's been quite encouraging."

(EDITOR'S NOTE – Erin Roach is a writer in Nashville.) **BR**

Beloved strangers – on the road again

Fancy Finds eases transition for new adventure

By CAROL LAYTON | Baptist Children's Homes

Twenty-year-old Charles Pollard knew nothing about pastoring a church. So when called to a church on its last leg in a dusty Arizona town in the late 1950s, he built the congregation by sharing the sweetest name he knew with the roughest and toughest people he could find.

“I visited the prisons and hospitals, and every Tuesday and Thursday, after the family went to bed, I visited the bars,” he said. “I built that congregation from the bars mostly. After they joined the church, I’d go out with them and teach them to witness.”

Now, at 80 years of age, Charles still remembers one convert’s unique gospel message: “Brother, do you wanna die and go to hell and fry like a sausage?”

But building a church at age 20 in a rugged western town wasn’t even Charles’ first ministry challenge. Prior to that, he began a mission to migrant workers in Arizona’s Rainbow Valley. There, he confronted child abuse, murder, alcoholism, starvation and inhumane living conditions. He had successes there, but soon realized he needed ministry training. “The migrant workers were treated terribly. Emotionally, I just couldn’t take it anymore.”

Charles and Barbara Pollard paid some dues those early years, attending college, pastoring a church, and raising two little girls in a 20-foot trailer. “I wanted more than anything in the world to be a good daddy, but I could hardly feed them. I told God, ‘These girls are yours.’ He quickly spoke back, ‘Are you sure? Are you sure they are mine?’”

Charles was learning to fully trust God with the lives of his family. Soon, he saw an ad in the paper for a plumber. He knew nothing about plumbing either – but got the job and began a trade that would see him and Barbara through college and supplement their income for many years.

The two little Pollard girls, belonging to God, did not starve. Now grandmothers themselves, they have added four grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren to the Pollard family. Many in this family serve God in unique ways all over the world – a fact that brings Charles and Barbara “no greater joy.”

Pollard eventually acquired a doctorate in ministry, but still has a warm place in his heart for the seat-of-his-pants training the Lord provided as he preached and studied in Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado, Georgia and Texas. “Everywhere I went God performed miracles. I never went anywhere that I did not see the sweet tender hand of God.”

Barbara Pollard also witnesses that sweet tender hand. “I see our lives as circular – with God’s hand tying the end of things back to their beginnings – showing us that His plans are purposeful and good.”

Strong Baptist connections have regularly entwined the Pollards’ circle of life. While Barbara’s Baptist heritage traces back to the 19th century, Charles became a Baptist just to get a date. “Her daddy wouldn’t let me date her unless I went to church. So I became a Baptist.”

Now, after 16 years in North Carolina, the Pollards feel called to return to New Mexico where they began their lives together – a move requiring significant



At right, Barbara and Charles Pollard consult with Baptist Children's Homes staff who conducted their downsizing sale – Yvette Smith, east regional director for North Carolina Baptist Aging Ministry and Renee Gregory, director of Fancy Finds. Below, the downsizing sale at the Pollard's home in Cary was held over two days. Fancy Finds advertises, organizes and tags items, and conducts the sale.



**“I see our lives as circular – with God’s hand tying the end of things back to their beginnings – showing us that His plans are purposeful and good.”
– Barbara Pollard**

downsizing. Naturally, a Baptist ministry stepped into the circle.

Barbara remembers, “Our friends at First Baptist Church Cary knew we were planning a yard sale and told us about Fancy Finds Estate Sale Service. It was a natural for us.”

Fancy Finds is a ministry outreach of Baptist Children’s Homes of North Carolina (BCH) where 100 percent of the proceeds from a variety of services enrich the lives of children, aging adults and families served through BCH.

While Charles and Barbara both feel God’s hand in the move, they differ in the details of downsizing. Charles is ecstatic. “It thrills me to let go of stuff. I was born in poverty and raised with nothing. It feels more comfortable to be living with less.”

Barbara’s gentle smile doesn’t wane even as she admits, “It breaks my heart. I looked at my crystal and remembered entertaining every place Charles pastored

and now I’m not going to be doing that anymore. But it’s a good time to be done with it and I love that Fancy Finds is taking care of things; I would be talking people out of buying stuff!”

During the Pollard’s downsizing sale, a man they had not seen in many years stopped by to say hello and goodbye. “You’ve always been in my heart,” he told Charles. He showed Barbara a picture of his son – a young man soon headed for the mission field. Barbara last saw him when he was eight years old and one of her piano students.

“It blesses me to think of this young man going to be a missionary. This kind of thing happens all the time. People come up to Charles and tell him of the impact he had on their lives.”

Barbara thinks of herself and Charles as “beloved strangers” – having traveled from church to church throughout six states. “I believe the travel is over. We need to draw in our boundaries a bit.”

Charles is ready for a new assignment out West. “The Baptists have been dying in the city where we’ll live and I look forward to helping them grow again. Our house is a block from the church. I hope they’ll give me opportunity to share the Jesus that I love.” Barbara smiles – knowing the chances are pretty good for her beloved stranger.

Visit fancyfinds.org or call Renee Gregory at (704) 909-8223. **B**

OPPORTUNITY CORNER more on page 15

Website training

Website development training in Cary is offered to create and update a basic church website using WordPress or Wix. These free classes at the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina will train participants on the basic and advanced functions of the content management

system, including basics of website terminology and design.

Each class will host 12 students. Wix classes are Aug. 9 or Oct. 4; WordPress training is Sept. 13. Registration is required.

Visit ncbaptist.org/website.

Regions nine and 10 present By All Means, a time of training and inspiration for Woman's Missionary Union of North Carolina (WMU-NC). The event is scheduled Aug. 13 from 9 a.m.-2 p.m. at First Baptist Church in Sylva. Light refreshments will be available during sign-in at 8:30 a.m. Participants will hear training updates and inspirational speaker, Amy Boone, WMU-NC executive director-treasurer. Registration fee



is \$15 and includes lunch and the WMU yearbook. Call or email Judy Pettigrew at (828) 627-2114 or judyjohn@bellsouth.net.



BAPTISTS ON MISSION

The Baptists on Mission Regional Rallies will highlight the variety of opportunities North Carolina Baptists have to be involved in missions across our state, in our nation and around the world. Featured will be worship, testimony, mission video and a prayer time for missions.

A main focus of these rallies will be the N.C. Missions Offering (NCO) and ministries that are supported by the NCO. A meal is provided for the N.C. Mission Rallies at no charge, but reservations are necessary. For each date listed below there are two regional rallies scheduled at various sites.

The deadline for reservations is one

week prior to the event. Visit baptistsonmission.org/events/region-rallies.

● **Aug. 15** – Region 5: Liberty Baptist Church, Thomasville; Region 7: Salem Baptist Church, Dobson

● **Aug. 16** – Region 3: Western Prong Baptist Church, Whiteville; Region 4: Aversboro Road Baptist Church, Garner

● **Aug. 22** – Region 8: First Baptist Church, Lincolnton; Region 10: Windy Gap Baptist Church, Franklin

● **Aug. 23** – Region 1: Meherrin Baptist Church, Murfreesboro; Region 9: West Asheville Baptist Church, Asheville

● **Aug. 25** – Region 2: Forest Hills Baptist Church, Wilson; Region 6: West Albemarle Baptist Church, Albemarle



Southeastern
Baptist Theological Seminary

Chapel services at Southeastern Seminary in Wake Forest embody the heart and soul of the seminary. Speakers include Southeastern faculty as well as pastors and leaders from a variety of states. Chapel is held every Tuesday and

Thursday at 10:30 a.m. when classes are in session, beginning Aug. 18. Special chapel services are occasionally held on Wednesday. Services are open to the public. Visit sebts.edu/news-resources/chapel/.

Submissions

The *Biblical Recorder* is pleased to publish staff changes, church news and events with a statewide interest. Please send information immediately following an event, or for opportunity corner, send at least two months in advance. Include cost and contact information in your email or correspondence. Send to dianna@BRnow.org or *Biblical Recorder*, P.O. Box 1185, Cary, NC 27512. Call (919) 847-2127.



Reaching the Nations in North America, Aug. 26-27 in Brentwood, Tenn., is designed to heighten the awareness and focus of Southern Baptists upon diaspora missions. Church leaders will be equipped with practical tools for engaging immigrants, refugees and

international students with the gospel for disciple-making.

The summit will include three main sessions, practical breakout seminars and peer group strategy development. Registration is \$35. Visit ncbaptist.org/reachthenations.

Software training

Free training opportunities are provided by Baptist State Convention of N.C. for churches and associations in areas such as Microsoft Word, Excel and PowerPoint. Each class hosts 12 students, and registration is required.

- **Excel** – Aug. 30
 - **Word** – Sept. 8
 - **PowerPoint and Movie Maker** – Sept. 20
 - **Publisher** – Oct. 6
- Visit ncbaptist.org/training.



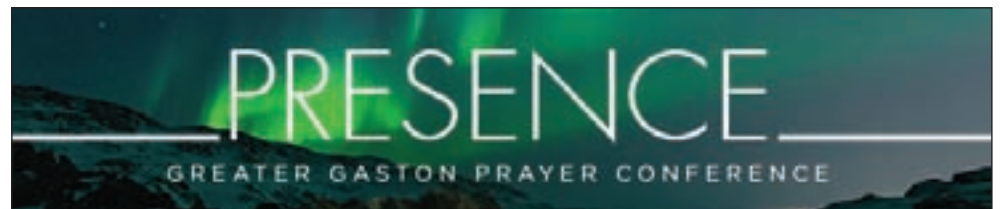
Woman's Missionary Union of North Carolina is offering Come to the Table, a mission leadership equipping event, Sept. 10 at Camp Mundo Vista.

Participants will learn the ingredients that make great leaders, hear about ministry opportunities and be challenged to invest in the missions education of others

of all ages. Registration and book store open at 8:30 a.m. with general session at 9 a.m.

Cost is \$25 and includes lunch & a National WMU yearbook. The event ends at 2 p.m. Register by Sept. 1.

Visit wmunc.wufoo.com/forms/come-to-the-table-sept-10/ or email cdaniel@wmunc.org.



Presence, the Greater Gaston Prayer Conference, will be hosted Sept. 16-17 with the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC) at Woodlawn Baptist Church in Lowell. Speakers include Richard Owen Roberts, president of International Awakening Ministries;

Chris Schofield, BSC director of the Office of Prayer; and Steve Griffith, pastor of Osborne Baptist Church in Eden.

The conference is free, but a love offering will be received.

Register at the door.

Visit ncbaptist.org/presence.

Baptist Nursing Fellowship's Annual Meeting – "With These Hands I ... HELP" – Sept. 16-18 at Ridgecrest Conference Center in Black Mountain helps health-care professionals utilize their talents to fulfill their desires to serve God alongside other people. Contact hours will focus on helping those dealing with physical and mental health challenges. There are ministry projects as well as a silent auction planned. Cost is \$274 for a double occupancy room and includes registration fee, four contact hours, two nights lodging and five meals. Call Ridgecrest Conference Center at (800) 588-7222 by Sept. 1 to register.



August 7

BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE

August 14

Manage Money Diligently

Focal passage: Proverbs 31:13-21

Act responsibly with what God has given you.

The way in which we use (or don't use) our resources really does matter to God.

It may seem silly, but I'll never forget the moment I tossed an American cake mix into the trash with tears in my eyes.

I was serving as a missionary in Central Europe and pre-packaged baking items were expensive. I hoarded them for special occasions.

On this particular day, I realized I had been so cautious with my stash that the items were far past their expiration date and could no longer be consumed safely. By saving the mix, I had completely missed my opportunity to enjoy its deliciousness and share it with those around me.

In Proverbs 31: 13-21, we read of a virtuous woman who did just the opposite with her everyday resources. Her example reminds us that we must humbly steward our God-given possessions, not allowing them to be used frivolously or go to waste.

The woman was quite enterprising;

she looked for wool and then worked it with "*willing hands*" (Proverbs 31:13).

She brought food for her family, rising early to make sure each person had what they needed.

This virtuous woman was so determined to use her resources wisely that the writer explained, "*her lamp never goes out at night*" (Proverbs 31:18).

She knew the resources at her disposal and managed them thoughtfully and responsibly.

Cake mixes hold very little allure for me today; I see hundreds of them every time I enter a grocery store. And yet, those boxes never cease to remind me that each gift we have is meant to be used wisely for the Kingdom, not hoarded away behind a kitchen cabinet.

We have been given so much more than treats in a pantry. Whether it is skills, talents, financial blessings or even time – each is a gift from our Heavenly Father. He has entrusted us with these resources, and we are to use them responsibly, just like the woman described in Proverbs 31.



EMILY ANTHONY
Member, Imago Dei Church, Raleigh

Focal passage: Ecclesiastes 11:1-6

Mark Twain addressed financial investing in his novel *Pudd'nhead Wilson* when he wrote, "October: This is one of the peculiarly dangerous months to speculate in stocks. The others are July, January, September, April, November, May, March, June, December, August and February."

Those words were written over 100 years ago, but the topic is still a hot one. Scroll through your cable television channels this evening, and you will inevitably stumble upon a commentator enthusiastically describing the benefits of investing. They claim that if you follow their advice, your finances will multiply and your future will be secure.

I'm convinced these men and women are very knowledgeable, but have you ever considered that God's Word, a much more trustworthy resource, also provides instruction for financial planning?

Written by King Solomon near the end

of his life, the book of Ecclesiastes contains a great deal of practical wisdom. In chapter 11, we find specific instructions regarding preparing financially for the years ahead. Solomon encourages long term and diversified investing, telling his readers to "*divide your portion to seven, or even to eight*" (Ecclesiastes 11:2).

One motivation for diversification is the unpredictable nature of the world in which we live. Only God knows what will happen tomorrow, much less what will happen in several decades, and we would be remiss to place all our resources in any one of these opportunities. They all have the potential to be disastrous.

And yet, Solomon cautions that focusing our attention on this uncertainty can paralyze us.

He writes, "*the person who watches the wind will not sow and he who looks at the clouds will not reap*" (Ecclesiastes 11:4). Yes, the future is unclear, but we must not stop investing because of fear or despair. We must press on, working and trusting in "*God who makes all things*" (Ecclesiastes 11:5).

He alone is our foundation and the One who entrusted us with these resources in the beginning.

August 7

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

August 14

Blinded

Focal Passage: 1 Samuel 22:6-17

As I sat down to write this article, I saw an online article in *Christianity Today* (June 24, 2016) by Ed Stetzer about an upcoming legislation in California that would restrict fully faith-based education to seminaries only. This would impact all Christian colleges and universities in the state. And, in turn, it will set a precedent that will probably affect Christian colleges and universities in all states.

We are living in a day and age in America where standing for Christian values and moral values are creating opposition at all levels.

Being able to share openly without any fear of persecution and opposition may be coming to an end. Our Founding Fathers saw the importance of God in creating this nation; He is being slowly pushed out. And in turn, we may be facing opposition strictly by doing what is biblically correct.

In our lesson this week, Saul and his army were pursuing David even though he had not done anything worthy of such treatment. He went to Ahimelech,

the priest, and sought supplies and aid. Ahimelech provided help. When Saul heard of it he accused Ahimelech of participating in a conspiracy against him. Because of Saul's accusation, Saul demanded that the priests be put to death. Saul ordered his men to kill them. They, however, would not obey because the priests were the Lord's anointed. They had chosen to obey God rather than man (see Acts 5:29).

The Bible is filled with examples of the truth that the world is not a friend of God. Often believers are called to stand up for what is right, even when everyone around them seems in opposition.

The days of being looked upon favorably by the government and those around us may be ending. We need to be aware and awake to the changes happening around us, and prepare to stand for God and His Word no matter what others may do. As Southern Baptists, we are called by God to build His Kingdom. Are we willing to take a stand for Him today?



THOMAS MARSHALL
Member, Spring Hill Baptist Church, Wagram

Focal Passage: 1 Samuel 25:14-17; 32-38

A seminary professor said that if God says something once in His Word be careful about building a doctrine from it.

So many cults and heretical teachings are developed from this. He went on to say if God says it twice, take heed to what He is saying. And if He repeats it three times, you can be sure it is important.

God says in Romans 12:19, "*Friends, do not avenge yourselves; instead, leave room for His wrath. For it is written: Vengeance belongs to Me; I will repay, says the Lord.*"

Just doing a simple search I found five other places that God says or teaches us the same concept.

If He says it that many times, I think it is safe to say He wants us to see this as highly important.

In our Family Memory Verses this week, we find this truth in what David has to say.

In 1 Samuel 25:33, David says to Abigail, "*Today you kept me from participat-*

Protected

ing in bloodshed and avenging myself by my own hand." David had been consistently refraining from taking any action against Saul.

Even though David had been anointed by Samuel to be king, He was waiting upon God to open up the doors to his assuming the position.

Even though Saul had frequently sought to destroy David, David still waited upon God.

In this account, Nabal had insulted and snubbed David and his men, and David was ready to take revenge out of selfish motives. David saw the refusal of Nabal to include them in the shearing festival as a personal affront. He was ready to take revenge.

Abigail had been an instrument that God used to stop David from senseless bloodshed. God would be the One who would take revenge for David in His own way and time. I am thankful in my life that God has taken matters into His Hand and that I was not personally responsible for selfish revenge.

God has a purpose and plan and as believers we need to trust Him to work all things out for the good (Romans 8:28).

AROUND THE STATE

Obituary

JAMES A. "JIMMY" MOORE JR. died July 18.

A South Carolina native, Moore received a bachelor's degree from Gardner-Webb University, a master of divinity degree from New Orleans Seminary and a doctor of ministry degree from the Columbia Theological Seminary. He completed his clinical pastoral education at University Hospital in Augusta, Ga. He was ordained by Fairview Baptist Church, Union, S.C., in 1978 and received a 2011 Lilly Endowment Clergy Renewal Grant.

He served churches in South Carolina and Mississippi before becoming pastor at First Baptist Church, Washington, where he served the past 23 years. He served on various denominational boards and committees as well as participating in missions through the church's Hispanic Mission in Washington and an ongoing partnership with Swaziland, Africa.

He is survived by his wife, Karen H. Moore; daughters, Stephanie Moore Warren and Amie Moore O'Kane; mother, Joyce T. Moore; brothers, Mike and Joe; and six grandchildren.

Memorials to: Swaziland Partnership Fund, the Widow's Mite Fund or the Music Ministry Endowment Fund of First Baptist Church, 113 North Harvey St., Washington, NC 27889.

Staff changes

DANE MARTIN has been called as minister with students at Ardmore Baptist Church, Winston-Salem. Martin previously worked at Urban Ministries of Wake County.

White Lake Baptist Church has called **THOMAS MARTIN** as pastor. Martin has previously been in pulpit supply work as well as 21 years with the U.S. Army.

ADAM SELF has been called as pastor to Atlantic Missionary Baptist Church. Self was previously an associate pastor at Calvary Baptist Church, Charlotte.

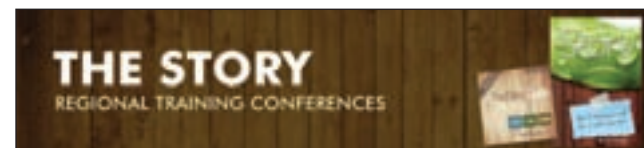
Peletier First Missionary Baptist Church, Cape Carteret, has called **CHAD BLANTON** as senior pastor. Blanton previously worked in the Internet evangelism department at the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, Charlotte.

TONY HOBBS has been called as senior pastor to Cove City Missionary Baptist Church. Hobbs previously led Faith Chapel Baptist Church, Jacksonville.

OPPORTUNITY CORNER



Aging Adults Innovating Ministry (AAIM), an outreach of the North Carolina Baptist Aging Ministry, is a network of ministers, lay leaders and church members working together to strengthen and equip aging adult ministries. There are three regional meetings this fall. The central area meets Sept. 19 in Thomasville, eastern area Sept. 20 in Greenville and western area Oct. 13 in Asheville. All gatherings are 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Call (877) 506-2226.



The Baptist Convention of North Carolina is hosting The Story Regional Evangelism Training Conferences. Each regional conference is 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. and includes lunch and conference materials including The Story Guide Leader Kit.

The total cost is \$20 per church leader; additional guests from your church are \$10 per person, which includes lunch and the Story Primer Guide.

Conference dates are Sept. 20 at Lincoln Avenue Baptist Church in Lincolnton, Oct. 4 at Mount Vernon Baptist Church in Boone and Oct. 6 at Warsaw Baptist Church. Visit ncbaptist.org/thestory.

ADVERTISE
in the *Biblical Recorder*
(919) 459-5691

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

Denomination

Anson Baptist Association is seeking a **Director of Missions**. Interested persons should mail a letter and resume to: Anson Baptist Association, PO Box 958, Wadesboro, NC 28170, ATTN: Rev. Teddy Lawson. We will accept resumes through August 10, 2016.

Pastor

Siloam Baptist Church of Ninety Six, SC, is prayerfully seeking a **Senior Pastor** to lead a congregation of 175+ avg attendance. Candidate should be traditional, conservative, biblical based pastor who preaches the inerrant word of God and adheres to Baptist Faith and Message 2000. The candidate must have a seminary degree and a minimum of five years pastoral experience. Please send resume and/or CD if available to Pastor Search Committee, Siloam Baptist Church, PO Box 373, Ninety Six, SC 29666.

Deep Creek Baptist Church, Pinehurst, NC, is seeking a **bi-vocational pastor** for a small congregation eager to grow. Must be ordained. Please send a CD/DVD with a resume to DCBC, Robert Edwards, PO Box 3452, Pinehurst, NC 28374.

Macedonia Baptist Church, Gaffney, SC, is seeking a **Full-Time Pastor**. Please send resumes to: Macedonia Baptist Church, Pastor Search Committee, 216 Macedonia Road, Gaffney, SC 29341, or chur3253@bellsouth.net. Job description available upon request.

PASTOR. Fruitland Baptist Church is prayerfully seeking a full-time Senior Pastor to shepherd our congregation. Information about our church can be found on our website, fruitlandbaptist.org. Send resumes to 150 College St., Hendersonville, NC 28792. Resumes will be received until August 30, 2016.

Church Staff

Oakhurst Baptist Church-Asheboro: **Part-time Youth Director/Pastor.** We are seeking a Part-time Youth Director/Pastor for Oakhurst Baptist Church with the purpose is to minister to the youth of our church and community in grades 6-12 and to administer, develop and implement youth ministry programs designed to meet the spiritual, social and emotional needs of the youth, leading them to spiritual commitments and disciplines. Related experience is required. Send resume with cover letter to personnel@oakhurstbaptist.com.

First Baptist Church of Oakboro seeks **part-time Director of Music**. This individual will be responsible for leading the church in the development and conducting of a comprehensive music ministry. Worship style is traditional with blended elements. Bachelor's degree is preferred. Applicants should send letter of interest, resume and references to dhuneycutt@fbcc@gmail.com.

Part-time Children's Director. Harvest Baptist Church, Burlington, NC (hbcurlington.net), is seeking an experienced person to lead our children's ministry: Nursery-5th grade. Sundays, Wednesdays, VBS, & one week of local camp are main responsibilities. Submit cover letter & resume to: emoschler@gmail.com.

Green Street Baptist Church, High Point, NC, is seeking a **full-time Student Pastor**. Seminary and at least five years ministry experience preferred. Send resume to kristi@greenstreet.org or 1701 Westchester Dr. Ste. 620, High Point NC 27262.

Miscellaneous

NCBAM needs churches to collect and distribute bags of shelf-stable groceries to aging adults in need. Call 877.506.2226 to learn how your church can address the hunger crises facing one in seven aging adults in NC.

Share the Biblical Recorder – FREE. Order a three-month free subscription. Contact Liz Tablazon at (919) 459-5693 or liz@BRnow.org to make arrangements.

Do you have staff changes at your church or association? Or special news you would like to share (significant church or church staff anniversaries or a mission effort to reach your community)? Let the *Biblical Recorder* know by calling (919) 847-2127 or email editor@BRnow.org.

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For more information, call the office at (919) 459-5691.

Cost for Baptist churches/organizations is \$1.20 per word, number and stand-alone initial (\$1.42 for commercial and non-Baptist entities) with a minimum charge of \$35. Classifieds also are carried online.

BRnow.org

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Darkness

Continued from page 8

important to find “people of peace” who can be a foundation for both growing as disciples and becoming missionaries advancing the gospel to places and in ways stateside volunteers couldn’t.

The good news is that despite the spiritual darkness that blankets this region, there are some rays of gospel light. For instance, there is a family living in a remote area that is a bit of a crossroads between the market town of Viraco and distant villages.

All the members of the family are believers, are interested in growing in faith through discipleship training, and are interested in their home being a center for gospel advance.

And then there is Lucila Huamani (wah-MAHN-ee), a widow whose husband was the pastor of a small evangelical church in the village of Machahuay (mah-CHAH-why).

He died eight years ago but she prepares the church every week, places fresh flowers at the altar, and opens the doors for any who will come. She straightens the benches, prays, reads her Bible, and sings hymns. Many weeks Lucila is the only person present.

“I pray that God will send someone to lead the church,” she said. “And that this



“The prevailing attitude is fear,” said Greg Danford, a volunteer stateside strategy coordinator from Wrightsboro Baptist Church, working to spread the gospel in this region. Wrightsboro is one church of a small partnership of churches that have adopted this area and these people. (Photo by Chris Turner)

church will become a place that shares the truth of Jesus Christ in this entire area.”

Danford said the road ahead will be difficult because of the challenges but he also felt confident that the people were hungry to hear the gospel. It will take a consistent presence and a focused strategy, he said, and that if anyone was

interested in knowing more about the needs in this area or about participating with Wrightsboro he can be contacted at gregdanford@gmail.com.

(EDITOR’S NOTE – Chris Turner is director of communications for the Tennessee Baptist Convention and a former International Mission Board missionary served on the five-member team in Peru.) **BR**

Rules

Continued from page 9

for Southern Baptist messengers to the annual meeting. He also pointed to the “tremendous work” accomplished by the SBC Executive Committee in making the convention’s governing documents available online and through the mobile app.

Culbreth offers a three-hour class to local associations entitled, “How to Survive a Business Meeting.”

He is also available to messengers during the annual meeting to answer questions about motions and other procedures.

“I did more of that this year than I’ve done in the last five years combined,” Culbreth said, “which is a good thing because it means people are interested in trying to find out how it works.”

Whitfield said, “Knowing the process helps us to participate in it and trust it.”

Only time will tell whether messengers will become more involved in one of the largest deliberative assemblies in the world or whether the repetitious motions, reports and points of order will lull them to sleep.

The SBC parliamentarians hope to see more engagement, and a closer recognition of how Robert’s Rules is a vital tool that mobilizes people and resources for the sake of the Great Commission. **BR**

1 DAY

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The mission and ministries of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina are made possible by your gifts through the Cooperative Program and the North Carolina Mission Offering.



We'll call him Charles.

He is a student at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, located right here in North Carolina, in Wake Forest.

Charles was able to serve in a remote African village, sharing the gospel in an area that's mostly Muslim. He was overjoyed to see young men accept Christ as Savior and be baptized. This was through one of the partnership projects Southeastern has with the International Mission Board.

Southeastern is one of the six U.S. seminaries North Carolina Baptists support through their Cooperative Program. Students get great training for future ministry as pastors, missionaries and other leaders. But they pay a fraction of what most seminaries charge, because the Cooperative Program keeps fees low.

The six Southern Baptist seminaries have a total of some 18,000 students. Through their Cooperative Program giving, N. C. Baptists assure that churches will have trained pastors to call and equipped missionaries to send.

Many N. C. Baptist churches will pray for Charles and other seminary students on Sunday, July 17. To join them, go to ncbaptist.org/cpresources and download "52 Sundays."